

HAMILTON COUNTY
**Regional
Planning
Commission**



HAMILTON COUNTY
**Planning
Partnership**



2011 ANNUAL REPORT

HAMILTON COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
and
PLANNING PARTNERSHIP



Director's Message



In 2011 we continued to build on the great successes of 2010 and embarked on new planning efforts to improve Hamilton County and its communities.

To Those We Serve:

On behalf of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission and Planning Partnership Executive Committee, I am pleased to provide you with our 2011 Annual Report.

As you read this report, you will see that we continued to build on the great successes of 2010 and embarked on new planning efforts to improve Hamilton County and its communities.

With critical support of County Commissioners, jurisdiction members, volunteers and our many organizational partners, we are able to collaborate to achieve our mutual goals related to physical, economic, and social issues. More importantly, our partnerships allow us to bring expertise to the table so that we can assist our members as well as serve as a forum to learn about issues of mutual concern.

Through our Sustainable Hamilton County initiative, we formed new partnerships with a number of organizations that are focusing on improving our community and advancing planning in the region. As we expand our partnerships with critical agencies that impact planning in Hamilton County, we continue to support initiatives that have grown out of previous partnerships. Through this approach we are implementing the goals and objectives envisioned in Community COMPASS – Hamilton County's Master Plan.

This report chronicles the numerous projects that we engaged in last year. As you can see, we focus on educational efforts for elected and appointed officials as well as specific planning and implementation projects. Of specific note, our office spent a considerable time in the latter part of 2011 compiling data from the 2010 Census in an effort to provide accurate data and enable informed decisions. Pages 8 – 13 provide a summary for Hamilton County.

It is critical to remember that the success of the Planning Partnership and the services provided by the Regional Planning Commission relies upon our jurisdiction members finding value in what we do and investing in our organization. The feedback we receive from our customers suggests that we are delivering the knowledge and tools they need to make critical decisions. I hope you agree.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd M. Kinskey". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Todd Kinskey, AICP
Director of Regional Planning

This report, as well as additional information about our work and progress, is available on our web site at <http://www.hamiltoncountyoio.gov/hcrpc/about.asp>.

Table of Contents

Regional Planning Commission.....	2
Planning Partnership	5
2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments	6
Partnerships and Forums	6
Technical Assistance to Local Communities	7
Essential Data for Effective Decision Making	8
Comprehensive and Collaborative Planning	13
Capacity Building	17
Communications and Outreach	18
2012 Outlook	20
2011 Boards/Committees/Organizations	21

Regional Planning Commission



HAMILTON COUNTY
Regional
Planning
Commission

Regional Planning Commission Vision

To assist Hamilton County and its communities, agencies and citizens in planning and achieving sustainable development and related community and regional goals.

Regional Planning Commission Mission

- To build planning partnerships for creating and implementing community plans in the context of the region.
- To provide data management and analysis for effective planning decision-making in Hamilton County governments.
- To promote an equitable balance of local, county and regional perspectives and interests in community planning forums.

The Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission (HCRPC) is an alliance of local planning commissions and governments that seeks to address mutual goals related to physical, economic, and social issues among the 49 communities within Hamilton County. HCRPC helps ensure that community trends are anticipated, challenges are addressed, priorities are focused, and our collective future is planned and achieved strategically.

The RPC provides advisory planning and development review services to the unincorporated areas (12 townships) of the County. It also provides similar services upon request to County municipalities that are members of the Commission and pay annual fees. The Commission's various planning activities include programs for subdivision compliance, community planning, development review and Census/data and information systems. The Commission's services are tied to annual work programs that monitor development trends, evaluate current policies, and update the Hamilton County Master Plan and related regulations for zoning, subdivision of land and traffic circulation.

The Commission is responsible for determining consistency of development proposals with adopted plans for township areas. Land use control responsibilities also include development review for consistency with zoning regulations, subdivision rules, and thoroughfare plans. Staff makes advisory zoning recommendations to the Hamilton County Rural Zoning Commission and to township and municipal zoning commissions. The RPC administers and takes final actions on land subdivision for the entire unincorporated area. It coordinates the multi-agency review of subdivision plans and ensures conformity with the County's regulations.

RPC prepares and disseminates information and maps on a variety of subjects related to planning, and this information is available for public and agency use. It maintains Census and other data on population, housing, zoning, building activity, socioeconomic development, school trends, and many physical and land use features. The staff coordinates and assigns street address numbers for the unincorporated areas and several municipalities. The Commission's staff also supports the various functions of the Rural Zoning Commission, the Planning Partnership, the Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System (CAGIS), the First Suburbs Consortium, and other boards, committees, and task forces.

Regional Planning Commission

The Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission is a seven member board. The composition of this Commission (whose members serve five-year terms) is as follows:

- Four residents of the unincorporated area of Hamilton County, who are nominated by Township Trustees and other interested parties, and appointed by the Board of County Commissioners
- One resident of a City or Village with a planning commission, who is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners
- One resident of a City or Village with a planning commission, exclusive of Cincinnati, who is elected by mail ballot of municipal planning commissions
- One resident of the City of Cincinnati appointed by the City of Cincinnati Planning Commission

Regional Planning Commissioners, 2011

- **Hal Franke**
(reappointed 2009, current term expires 2014)
- **John Linnenberg, Chair**
(reappointed April 2009, current term expires 2014)
- **David Okum**
(re-elected 2011, current term expires 2016)
- **Larry Sprague**
(reappointed 2010, current term expires 2015)
- **Merrie Stillpass**
(appointed 2010, current term expires 2015)
- **Cecil Thomas**
(re-appointed 2011, current term expires 2016)
- **Jim Obert**
(appointed 2011, current term expires 2016)

Planning Commission

2011 Jurisdiction Members

Addyston Village
Amberley Village
Anderson Township
Blue Ash City
Cincinnati City
Columbia Township
Crosby Township
Deer Park City
Evendale Village
Fairfax Village
Forest Park City
Glendale Village
Green Township
Greenhills Village
Hamilton County
Harrison Township
Lincoln Heights Village
Lockland Village
Madeira City
Mariemont Village
Milford City
Montgomery City
Springdale City
Symmes Township
Wyoming City

Membership

Membership in the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission (HCRPC) is on an annual basis. In 2011, twenty-four jurisdictions were members of the HCRPC paying fees totaling \$51,294.

Membership Benefits

1. Appointment of Planning Partnership representative(s)
2. Participation in Program, Editorial, and other ad-hoc committees
3. Free Attendance to Training for Planning and Zoning Commissioners
Value: \$200 per person (5 sessions at \$40 each)
4. Planning Partnership Annual Meeting - Free attendance for your community's representative(s)
Value: \$30+ per representative
5. Up to 8 hours of complimentary technical service such as site plan review, project research or meeting facilitation
6. Increased education, networking and outreach to public, private and nonprofit organizations
7. Ability to make informed decisions by having access through the HCRPC to specialized libraries such as:
 - Planning Commissioners' Journal
 - National Trust for Historic Preservation
 - American Planning Association
 - Planning Advisory Service
 - Planning Commissioners' Journal
 - Zoning Practice
 - Ohio Economic Development Association
8. GIS mapping services
9. HCRPC is an official Census Data Users Center, part of the select group of organizations that receives released Census data first. Dedicated staff prepares customized reports for Hamilton County communities

The communities at left paid their 2011 annual dues to support planning in Hamilton County. This funding enables HCRPC staff to support local governments in a variety of programs and initiatives.

Planning Partnership

A Collaborative initiative of the HCRPC

The Planning Partnership is a collaborative initiative of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. It is an advisory board that works to harness the collective energy and vision of its members to effectively plan for the future of our county. Rather than engaging in the Planning Commission's short-range functions such as zoning reviews, the Planning Partnership takes a long-range, comprehensive approach to planning, working to build a community that works for families, for businesses and for the region. The Partnership firmly believes that collaboration is the key to a positive, competitive and successful future for Hamilton County.

Mission

To bring together public, private and civic sector organizations engaged in community planning in Hamilton County so that mutual goals related to physical, economic and social issues can be planned for comprehensively and achieved collaboratively.

Vision

All governments and planning commissions in Hamilton County:

- Work together effectively (in and adjacent to Hamilton County) to resolve issues related to growth management, land use, green space, transportation, housing, public services, utilities and other cross-jurisdictional issues
- Effectively communicate between planning commissions and planning officials at all levels and forms of government and between public, private and civic sector stakeholders
- Build consensus on a unified, comprehensive community vision for Hamilton County
- Create and implement local and countywide plans through continuous and collaborative planning relationships with planning partners in the public, private, and civic sectors
- Plan for and achieve efficient use of our physical (i.e. natural and built), economic and social resources and assets
- Determine, achieve, and sustain local goals and plans within a regional framework
- Use local authority, and government closest to the people to create and implement community based solutions to local problems
- Make informed decision through consideration of local and countywide comprehensive plans
- Use a countywide database (information system) to support the comprehensive planning needs of local and county government
- Leverage collaborative power to improve funding and policy change at all levels of government



HAMILTON COUNTY

Planning Partnership



Chairperson

Tracy Winkler, Township Rep.



Chairperson-Elect

Yvette Simpson, City of Cincinnati Rep.



Vice-Chairperson

Richard Finan, Municipal Rep.

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments



Partnerships and Forums

Sustainable Hamilton County - Reinventing Our Communities Workshop Series 2010-2011

The program was designed as a series of workshops and a forum under the umbrella theme of "Sustainable Hamilton County - Reinventing Our Communities." The workshops provided perspectives on sustainability from different angles; The Built Environment, Trends, and Fiscal Sustainability. The implementation of the series was made possible by a successful grant application resulting in over \$40,000 in committed funds and, at a minimum, a similar amount of in-kind contributions plus brokering partnerships and a collaborative environment for organizations to come together. The workshops were enhanced by the participation of speakers who are national leaders in their fields of expertise. They presented models and research that showcased in a pragmatic way - why, what, and how to execute efficient changes to our urban environment.

The first two workshops were held in 2010 and the third "Fiscal Sustainability and Quality of Life" was offered on January 21, 2011. A Follow Up Forum "Sustainable Hamilton - Making It Happen" took place on March 11, 2011.



Michael Pagano

Hamilton County jurisdictions, through this program, have been able to get the most current information and increase their opportunities to meet and network with other representatives from other jurisdictions as well as with countless members of organizations from the public, private, and civic sectors. These programs have raised the profile and reach of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission and Planning Partnership and fulfills the organization's mission and adds value to the community's membership.

The "lets get things done" approach taken by all individuals and organizations involved produced quick gains that people in the county can benefit from. Among these: online video presentations of the workshops, a sustainable Hamilton County website that includes a community calendar and resources, a Housing Resources Directory in printed and online versions, a Safe Routes to School Roundtable, and collaborations on several grant applications involving planning and community health.

Safe Routes to School Roundtable

The Safe Routes to School Program (SR2S) Roundtable took place on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at the Wyoming Civic Center. Panelists for the event, organized by the



Hamilton County Planning Partnership, were Frank Birkenhauer, Director of Development for Colerain Township; Steve Sievers, Assistant Administrator for Anderson Township; Terrance Vanderman,

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

Community Development Director for the City of Wyoming; Annalee Duganier, Assistant to the city Manager for the City of Madeira; and Caroline Duffy, consultant with Barr & Prevost. All members of the panel had applied for, and received a Safe Routes to School grant.

Because the grantees were all in different phases (planning, design, and construction) their insights and lessons learned were valuable for the attendees. Participants learned: that a plan is the most important first step, that it is very important to work with the community and schools, how to stretch the grant dollars (creative ways to acquire right of way, use of approved contractors, and the County Engineer), that sidewalks are not the only use for the grant, that upfront money is needed and the grant will reimburse for expenses, and how to get community involvement and surveys pre and post improvements.

As a result of this workshop, there is more interest from local jurisdictions in the SR2S Program with additional applications for the funding as well as grants awarded.

Housing Resources Directory

On October 27, 2011 at the Marge Schott Boy Scouts Center, a Networking and Housing Resources Presentation took place. Over 100 people attended from local jurisdictions, Community Development Corporations, and other organizations from the public, private, and civic sector involved in housing in the county. This event was a culmination and celebration of the work of a group of volunteers who researched and catalogued resources to promote housing in Hamilton County. The project includes a Housing Resources Directory website, with a domain name (www.housingresourcesdirectory.org) secured for the next three years, free and open to the public and a one time limited edition of a printed version, which was distributed at the October 27 meeting.

Technical Assistance to Local Communities

First Suburbs Housing Program: Village of Lockland Housing Plan

The First Suburbs Housing Program (FSHP) is an initiative of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, in partnership with Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME). The Workforce Housing Program, which began in 2007 through a grant from the United Way of Greater Cincinnati, funds a Housing Planner to assess housing conditions and needs as well as to prepare housing plans for selected municipalities in first suburb communities.

Housing Plans include recommendations and tools for improving, redeveloping, and/or creating workforce housing. Workforce housing refers to single-family homes, townhouses, condominiums, starter homes, and/or apartments that are affordable to area workers, such as retail and restaurant workers, teachers, firefighters, factory workers, etc. The ultimate outcome of the housing plans are to define opportunities for working families to live affordably within the County by expanding housing options for both homeowners and renters.



2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

In 2011 a housing plan for the Village of Lockland was completed. The aim of this housing study was to address current and future housing needs of the community, in line with the vision and the goals established by the community. The housing plan includes an assessment of the existing socio-demographic, housing conditions, and housing market for the Village. A windshield study of two target areas was conducted as part of the study to identify and address residential target areas for redevelopment opportunities in the Central Lockland Residential Neighborhood, and Southeast Lockland Residential Neighborhood. The plan also includes a brief analysis of the Village's economic conditions and status of the business district and makes minor recommendations for improvement.

Essential Data for Effective Decision Making

CAGIS Support

Hamilton County is a consortium member to the Cincinnati Area Geographic System (CAGIS). Regional Planning receives notifications of new roadways, zone changes, jurisdiction annexation changes, and School District and school changes - among other information - that require updates in the CAGIS database. Using the CAGIS database, HCRPC seeks to assist individual communities and to address mutual goals related to physical, economic, and social issues among the 49 communities within Hamilton County. Technical support for communities includes geographic mapping and analysis, census analysis and reports, database design and management, and more.

Library of Plans and Planning Documents

The Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission library is a specialized reference resource that includes plans and studies for this region. In addition, the HCRPC subscribes to several professional organizations such as the Planning Advisory Service, Ohio Economic Development Association, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation which enhance the ability to tap into additional research resources.

2010 Census Data Release

Staff of the HCRPC spent considerable time in 2011 analyzing 2010 Census Data for Hamilton County. Following is a synopsis of Hamilton County data. More detailed information can be found at: http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/data_products/default.asp.

Hamilton County has experienced a significant fluctuation of growth over the past forty years. Overall, the County lost over 120,000 people since 1970, more than a tenth of its population and close to 43,000 people within the last 10 years. The urban core of the County, Cincinnati, has lost almost half of its population since 1970, yet many rural and suburban areas have nearly doubled their population in that same time. Many of the municipalities that experienced a 50% growth or more since 1970 reside on the outskirts of the County. Only Amberley Village, Cleves, Crosby Township, Green Township, City of Harrison, Miami Township, Montgomery, Newtown, North Bend, Springdale, Woodlawn and Wyoming have experienced a population growth since 2000.

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

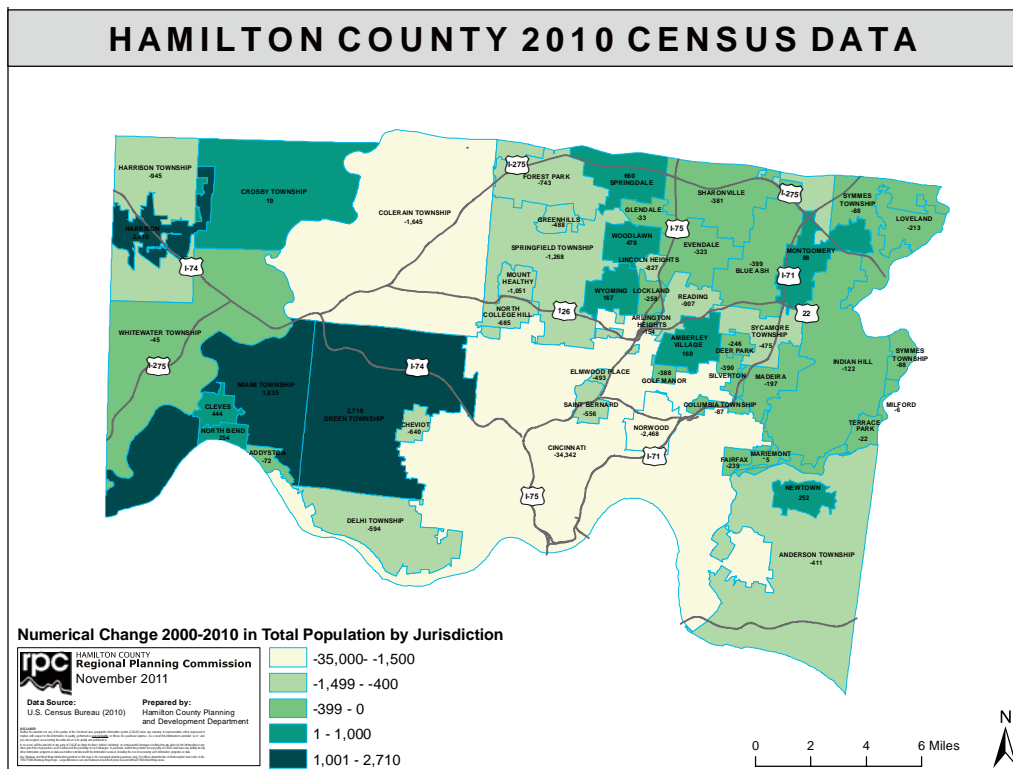
Most of the municipalities that have lost at least 25% of their population since 1970 have dense suburban settings. The communities that have lost over 10% of their population since 2000 include: Arlington Heights, Cincinnati, Elmwood Place, Evendale, Fairfax, Greenhills, Harrison Township, Lincoln Heights, Mount Healthy, Norwood and St. Bernard. The 2010 Census numbers revealed that the City of Cheviot (7,226 people per square mile) remained the most dense community while Crosby Township remained the least dense (142 people per square mile) compared to the County's density – 1,970 people per square mile.

It is important to study how the proportional distribution of the population has shifted among the jurisdictions to understand how the County population has changed as a whole. This data is crucial in identifying growth patterns, developing smart growth strategy plans, and determining areas for redevelopment in accordance with housing market trends. In 1970, the City of Cincinnati held nearly half of the County's population, while today it holds only 37%. Contrarily, County residents showed their fondness for low-density development as townships on the fringe of the County like Anderson, Crosby, Harrison, Miami, and Symmes each grew by at least 80% since 1970. Consequently, now Anderson, Colerain, and Green Townships each hold at least 5% of the County population.

Many areas directly surrounding the I-75 and I-71 corridors lost population. Those most dramatically hit by the decline (-25% to -50%) surround the urban core; including Ar-

2000-2010 Population Change

Source: US Censu Bureau



2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

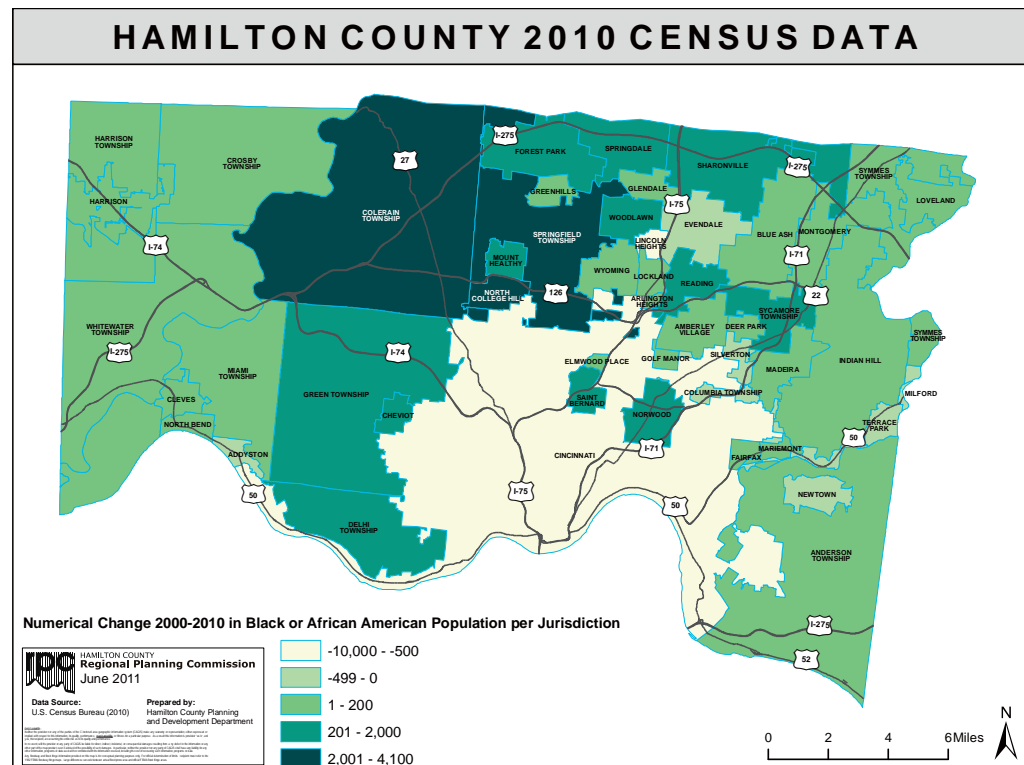
lington Heights, Columbia Township, Elmwood Place, Fairfax, Golf Manor, Norwood, St. Bernard, Silverton, and others. The jurisdictions just north of these areas, such as Amberley Village, Deer Park, Glendale, Mount Healthy, North College Hill, Springfield Township, and Wyoming, experienced up to -25% declines as well.

As the County becomes more diverse, keeping track of how race and ethnicity has changed is crucial. This data is especially useful when developing public literature or signage, so that predominant languages can be taken into account.

From 2000 to 2010, the White population was the only demographic to lose numbers, declining from 72% of the County to 69%. In fact, all other racial and ethnic groups in the County grew over the past decade. Of those to increase population, the Hispanic, or Latino population grew the most with a 116% increase, changing their presence in the County from just over 1% to nearly 3%. There were only eleven county subdivisions that gained White population in the past decade - Amberley Village, Cheviot, Cleves, Crosby Township, Green Township, Harrison City, Lincoln Heights, Miami Township, Newtown, North Bend, and Woodlawn - all others lost White population to some extent. The only noticeable pattern of this population shift is a higher concentration of whites in the western, less developed municipalities of the County. Of the jurisdictions to lose White population, Cincinnati, Colerain Township, Forest Park, Norwood, and Springfield were among those who lost the most.

2000-2010 Black or African American Population Change

Source: US Census Bureau



2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

The second largest racial group in the County is Black or African American. Looking at the map below, the jurisdictions with the most Black or African American population are concentrated in the center of the County, in Cincinnati and west of the I-75 corridor. Contrary to the White population's living patterns, these areas tend to be more dense with people and housing units. Among the many jurisdictions that grew their African American population from 2000 to 2010, Colerain Township, Forest Park, North College Hill, and Springfield Township topped the charts, all with at least a 1,000 person increase. Only seven of the County's forty-nine municipalities lost Black population, but those who lost most were Cincinnati and Lincoln Heights. The Black population shift is somewhat similar to that of Whites in that African Americans are also slowly moving away from the urban core into surrounding areas with newer housing stock.

Although the County's Asian population numbers are miniscule compared to the two categories previously discussed the patterns of their concentration are noteworthy. The County's Asian concentrations are located in the northeast corner of the County. Over 9% of Blue Ash and Symmes Township's populations are of Asian descent. In terms of density, these two communities rank around the middle for people and housing units per square mile. However, these areas have been steadily growing from 1970 to 2000 and have only declined mildly in the past decade. Of those jurisdictions with a growing Asian population, Anderson, Blue Ash, Cincinnati, Green Township, Montgomery, Sycamore Township, Symmes Township, and the Village of Indian Hill rank at the top, all with over a 100 person increase since 2000. Overall, the County's Asian population has grown nearly 17% since 2000 - the fourth largest demographic increase in the County.

Ranking in third with the largest numerical increase in population for the County is the "two or more races" population. This category consists of any person in the County that identifies as having two, three, four, or more races. Although no County jurisdiction has more than 3.5% of their population made up of two or more races, this racial group appears to be universally on the rise. Only five municipalities lost part of their multiracial population, none of which exceeded 25 people. The communities with the highest concentration of "two or more races" population include Addyston, Arlington Heights, Elmwood Place, Forest Park, Greenhills, and Lockland, all with just over 3%. Cincinnati had by far the largest numerical increase in this demographic, totaling just over 1,500 people. The closest County jurisdiction behind Cincinnati is Colerain Township, with just over 550 new multi-racial inhabitants. Overall, the "two or more races" population increased by over 50%, with just over 5,000 new residents.

The total Hispanic or Latino population in the County for 2010 was just over 11,000, about 2.6% of over 800,000 people. Having more than doubled over the past decade, the Hispanic or Latino population is quickly becoming a more prominent demographic in the County. Cincinnati, holds by far the most of this demographic, with almost 8,500 persons, but Springdale is this ethnic group's most heavily concentrated municipality, with nearly 18% of its population being Hispanic or Latino. Colerain Township and Forest Park

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

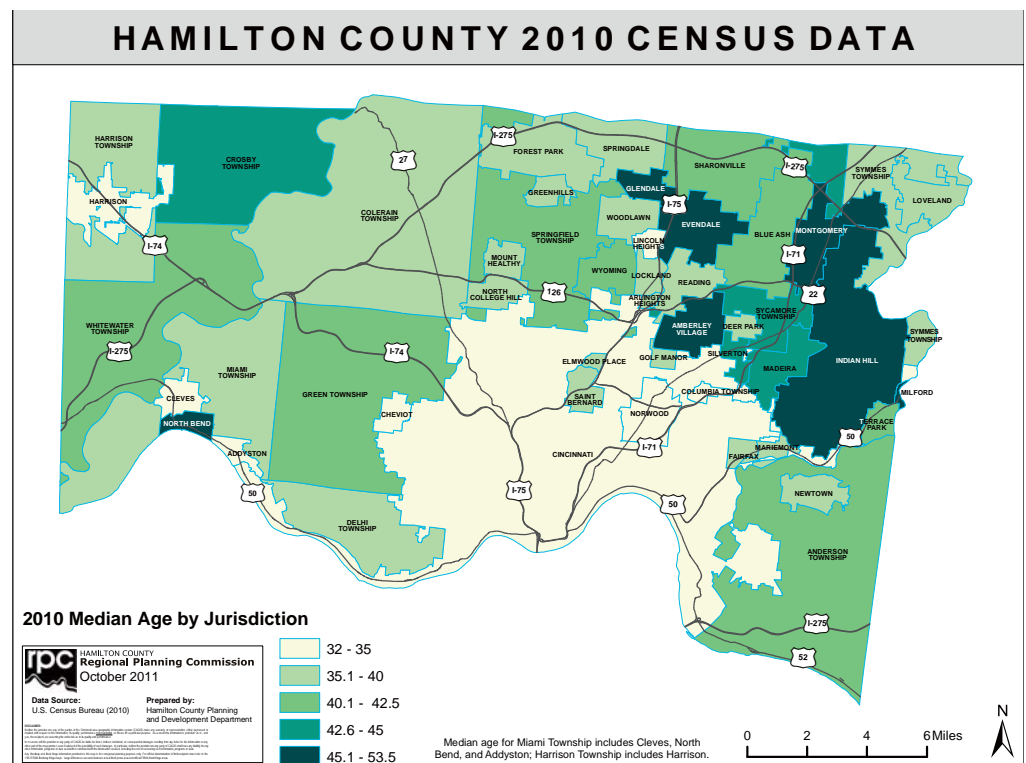
also hold a noteworthy number of Hispanic or Latino inhabitants, each with over 1,000. Overall, this group has grown more than any other in the County since 2000.

Much of the United States is seeing a gradual rise in median age and a general slowing of new children being born. From 2000 to 2010, the County's aging patterns reflected the nation's, as the median age for the County increased about 5% since 2000. Only seven jurisdictions had a lower median age in 2010 than in 2000: Cheviot, Columbia Township, Golf Manor, Lockland, Mariemont, Norwood, and Springdale. Although most of the County is fairly sporadic in median age distribution, it is apparent in both the 2000 and 2010 Median Age by Jurisdiction Maps that an older population resides in the northeast corner of the County. Located in that vicinity, Amberley Village, Evendale, Glendale, Indian Hill, Madeira, Montgomery, Silverton, and Sycamore Township all have a median age of over 42.6. Crosby Township and North Bend are the only other two jurisdictions in the County with comparable aging populations.

Of the jurisdictions with the lowest median ages, Addyston, Cincinnati, Cleves, Columbia Township, Harrison City, and Lincoln Heights all fall within the 32 to 35 years of age category. Of the forty-nine jurisdictions in Hamilton County, only nineteen had a positive increase in children under 5 years of age. Of those, Cleves, Harrison City, and North Bend were among the highest with over a 25% increase in the past decade. Harrison City

2000-2010 Median Age Population Change

Source: US Census Bureau



2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

also had the largest numerical increase in the county. Cincinnati lost the largest numerical number, reaching over 2,000. Overall, the "under 5 years of age" population decreased around 5.8% (roughly 3,200 people in Hamilton County 2000-2010). Making up nearly a quarter of the County's residents, the population under 18 years of age is the second largest demographic group. Similar to the population under 5 years of age, however, the population under 18 years of age also declined over the past decade. Totaling just over a 28,500 residents loss, the total underage population is down 13% from 2000. Although Colerain Township, Delhi Township, Harrison City, Norwood, and Springfield Township all contributed over a 1,000 person decline to this data while the City of Cincinnati accounted for over half of the total loss in this demographic at over 15,000. There were only six jurisdictions that increased their child population over the past decade: Amberley Village, Cleves, Harrison City, Mariemont, North Bend, and Springdale.

The largest age demographic in the County is the "working population," or those who are between the ages of 18 to 64 years of age. Spanning 46 years of life, this demographic declined the least amount of all the age demographics at about 2%, which equates to over 7,000 residents. Whereas in 2000, this age group lived sporadically within the County, 2010 data appears to show a pattern centered near the City of Cincinnati. Currently, the most concentrated jurisdictions include Arlington Heights, Deer Park, Lockland, Norwood, Silverton, and Woodlawn with over 65% of their populations being made up of this age group. The population over 65 years of age is the third largest age group in the County, making up about 13% of the total population. From 2000 to 2010, this population declined like all the previously mentioned age groups. Nearly all of the jurisdictions to follow this trend were near or just north of the City of Cincinnati. On the other hand, the most heavily populated municipalities of this group were Amberley Village, Glendale, North, and Springdale.

Comprehensive and Collaborative Planning

First Suburbs Consortium of Southwest Ohio

The actions of the General Assembly dominated the work of First Suburbs in 2011. Drastically reducing state spending is a policy cornerstone of the Kasich administration. But because much of state expenditures are directly linked to local government operations, any reduction can create serious problems for Ohio's townships, villages, and cities.

Historically, First Suburb member communities have counted on revenue from the Ohio Estate Tax and Local Government Fund to help pay for basic services. In 2012, our members are scrambling to fill budget holes created by severe cuts to these two vital funding programs. This situation creates an opportunity for member communities to help one another and come up with innovative ways to save money, balance budgets, provide services that citizens expect, and maintain community identity and traditions.

This autumn, First Suburbs, the Board of County Commissioners, and Center for Local Government began planning a shared services workshop. The purpose of the workshop



HAMILTON COUNTY

**First
Suburbs
Consortium**

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

is to bring together community leaders, civic organizations, and public service providers to share ideas and build new partnerships. Many innovative service-sharing arrangements are already in place and working very well across Hamilton County.

Learning from and building on these local successes is how First Suburbs believes our communities will overcome the challenges of the current state policies regarding local government. First Suburbs Consortium is in an excellent position to lead new collaborations and expand different service sharing projects across its member communities during this coming year.



To advance the practices of green infrastructure and to leverage this opportunity into expanded community redevelopment.

Communities of the Future and Project Groundwork

The Communities of the Future Advisory Committee (CFAC) was very active in 2011 in planning for the stormwater solutions for the Lick Run Watershed---the first major project of Project Groundwork: the multi-year and multibillion initiative to implement solutions to the 14 billion gallon combined sewer overflow (CSO) problem. The proposed Lick Run Project would include a series of new underground storm sewers and above ground waterways to transport stormwater to the Mill Creek. The primary element of the project would be an urban waterway that would run through the South Fairmount neighborhood between Queen City and Westwood Avenues. This solution would eliminate about 800 million gallons of combined sewer overflow (CSOs) annually.

The CFAC helped in the planning for a Lick Run Open House in January 2011 to introduce the local neighborhood to some initial visions of the proposed Lick Run solutions. The CFAC Subcommittees: Inform & Influence, Policy and Economic Development worked on various agendas in support of developing community outreach strategies, policy solutions and economic strategies for existing businesses that would apply in the development a Lick Run Master Plan. Hamilton County Regional Planning assisted MSD by facilitating these subcommittees and their actions.

The CFAC also helped MSD in developing and presenting two Lick Run Community Design Workshops in 2011. The first workshop was hosted at Roberts Paideia Academy in August and featured an overview presentation and four breakout sessions designed to gather community input on the proposed urban waterway. Community input was collected through written surveys and visual preference surveys, which used photographs of various urban views to solicit participant preferences on topics ranging from waterway characteristics to recreational opportunities. One hundred and thirteen people attended the workshop and the findings of a survey completed by the attendees showed that a majority thought the urban waterway would benefit the community. Other findings included high support for safe walking and biking trails, general support for historical architectural styles over modern and the need for an identifiable business district, a mix of restaurants, a grocery store and other basic services.

The second Lick Run Community Design Workshop was hosted at the Gilbert A. Dater Montessori School in October and ninety three people participated. This workshop also

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

featured an overall presentation of findings of the 1st workshop and then small group discussions to review and discuss design concepts for the proposed urban waterway. The findings for the second workshop identified that the urban waterway should provide ecological benefits, wildlife habitat, and opportunities for environmental education. Also, the neighborhood/business district should promote a walkable, mixed-use business district that improved pedestrian safety.

In 2012, the CFAC will complete planning for Lick Run and continue community engagement in other CSO watersheds with community open houses and design workshops.

Hamilton County Energy Efficiency & Conservation Programs

Implementation of the \$4.8 million Hamilton County Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG-Formula) began in earnest during 2011. The major project of the grant is the Energy Performance Contracting Project (EPC) which included EPC projects for the County and twelve participating jurisdictions. The County contracted with the energy service company Ameresco in collaboration with Thermal Tech Engineering to develop the EPC projects. Ameresco first conducted initial scoping audits for the County's buildings and other facilities to identify and evaluate energy-saving opportunities. By the end of 2011, Ameresco had completed scoping audits for the County and all participating jurisdictions. The County had also signed a contract with Ameresco to complete projects on the Phase 1 buildings: County Administration, Alms & Doepke Building, Taft Center and A&D Parkhaus Garage. For 2012, it is expected that the County and the participating jurisdictions will complete all their EPC projects. The County and other participating jurisdictions will reap the long term benefit of much lower energy costs with the implementation of their EPC Projects. The energy savings gained from the implementation of the EPC projects should more than pay for the cost of the energy retrofit projects.

The EECBG Grant also funded the work of the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance (GCEA) (\$800,000) for facilitating energy audits and energy efficiency retrofits for Hamilton County residences as well as small businesses and non-profits. In 2011, GCEA implemented a new software PSD IT tool that enables its ten home performance contractors to improve their energy audit deliverables and salesmanship. The GCEA held several outreach events in and began a partnership with the region's Green Umbrella organization to promote community awareness of its work. The Energy Alliance actively sought commercial grade audit projects including major non-profit projects. By the end of 2011, the GCEA had completed 506 residential energy audits in Hamilton County and implemented 142 residential energy retrofits with a square footage of 301,906.

Another EECBG Project involved Clarion Associates LLC in collaboration with McBride Dale Clarion and the Development Center for Appropriate Technology and working closely the Hamilton County Planning and Development staff to develop the *Hamilton County Development Regulations Analysis for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability: Diagnostic Report and Recommendations* (January 2012). This project was initiated with two days of stakeholder interviews by the consultant group with representatives from the Hamilton

Energy Performance Contract Project Communities (EPC)

Village of Addyston
Amberley Village
City of Blue Ash
City of Cheviot
Delhi Township
Village of Fairfax
City of Forest Park
Village of Golf Manor
Village of Lockland
City of Norwood
City of St. Bernard
Symmes Township
City of Wyoming

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

County Planning & Development Department and the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission as well as a group of Hamilton County jurisdictions' planning directors. The stakeholder interviews also including meetings with local design professionals, regional agencies and utilities (GCMSD, OKI Regional Council of Governments), commercial and community developers, regional transit and trails/paths advocates, park districts and environmental groups, educational resources (UC-DAAP, Cincinnati State, Xavier University), and urban agriculture advocates. The consultants conducted a diagnosis of Hamilton County development codes and worked closely with Hamilton County staff to develop appropriate recommendations for revising the codes to enable better energy efficiency and sustainability.

And finally, the Workforce Development Center of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College – worked with the Super Jobs Center to identify possible women and minority applicants to offer the scholarships for the Building Performance Institute (BPI) Building Analyst I Certification Training. The Workforce Development Center taught two classes in 2011 with twelve scholarship students in the first class and fifteen in the second class. In the end, eighteen students went on to pass the BPI Building Analyst Certification exam and received their certification. The BPI certified graduates can now apply for jobs with the energy efficiency contractors employed by the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance for energy efficiency residential audits and retrofits.

Greenhills Zoning Project

In early 2011, the Regional Planning Commission entered into a contractual agreement with the Village of Greenhills to update their Zoning Code to reflect the goals and aspirations contained in their recently adopted Master Plan. Staff performed a complete code diagnosis to identify deficiencies and determine where significant changes were necessary. After consultation with the Village Law Director and the Village Planning Commission, it was determined that a completely new code should be drafted. Staff, in consultation with the Village Planning Commission, worked over the Summer and Fall to prepare a new Zoning Code that code includes a number of new regulations that currently don't exist within the existing code and includes regulations for the "Village Center" District, a new district being proposed for the central portion of the Village that contains an existing shopping center and open space areas. The requisite public hearings and adoption process will occur in the first half of 2012.

Hamilton County Land Bank

Planning staff spent considerable time in 2011 assisting County Administration in the effort to establish a County Land Reutilization Corporation – the Landbank. In addition to research on the subject, staff worked with representatives of the Thriving Communities Institute, a consultant hired to assist Hamilton County operationalize the landbank. Staff also served as the point person for public presentations to build support for the effort to establish the landbank and to answer questions from interested parties. As part of this effort, the Planning Partnership hosted a Landbank Forum in June to hear from local jurisdictions and other various stakeholders. Staff also assisted the County Treasurer

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

by preparing the Articles of Incorporation documentation required by the State Auditor. The end of 2011 saw the formal launching of the Landbank with the appointment of a nine (9) member board and the formulation of an agreement with the Port Authority to operate the Landbank.

Capacity Building

2011 Community Planning Forum

The Community Planning Forum, formerly known as Planning Commissioners' Forum, took place on February 26 at the Marge Schott Boy Scout Achievement Center with participation of commissioners and committee members from fifteen jurisdictions. The networking event included a presentation by Ben Passty from the UC department of Economics. The presentation focused on the interpretation and possible repercussions at the local jurisdiction level of the results of the 2010 Census.

2011 Newly Elected Officials Workshop

Thirty-six newly elected officials from twenty-two Hamilton County jurisdictions gathered on Saturday, December 3 to participate in a workshop and networking event offered by the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission (HCRPC) and Planning Partnership. The workshop is a headstart program for just elected officials interested in learning about the resources available to them from the HCRPC and other County departments.

Presenters showed participants where to look for assistance regarding different subjects such as: planning, zoning, mapping, census data, community development grants, housing resources, land bank, transportation, waste management, grants and resources to improve public health, trainings and other educational and networking opportunities.

2011 Training for Planning and Zoning Commissioners

If you are a new planning or zoning commissioner wondering what you've gotten into, a veteran member brushing up on some skills, or simply wanting to do your best to serve your community, the Planning and Zoning Commissioners Training is just for you.

For over ten years, the Planning Partnership has taught both newly-appointed and experienced commission members about their jobs as citizen-planners. Over 350 people have taken advantage of this great educational opportunity, offered free-of-charge for Planning Partnership members. Non-members pay a nominal fee to cover material and dinner costs.

This five-part training series teaches the legal and ethical framework of planning and zoning controls, commissioners' role in a community's planning process, how to effectively manage public hearings, and site plan review skills. The Planning Partnership works with experienced professionals to develop and teach each course, and the courses combine lecture material with hands-on skills training and take-home reference material.

These classes were possible thanks to funding and assistance provided by the Hamilton



Gary Powell at the Legal and Historic Framework Session

2011 Training Participants

City of Blue Ash
City of Deer Park
Village of Greenhills
Liberty Township
Village of Lincoln Heights
City of Montgomery
City of North College Hill
City of Norwood
City of Oxford
City of Sharonville
City of Springdale
City of Trenton
West Chester Township
City of Wyoming

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

County Regional Planning Commission, the Silverton-Deer Park Fire District, and the following local experts who volunteered their services as instructors: Gary Powell, Anne McBride, Jonathan Woche, Andrea Yang, Dr. Rainer Vom Hofe, Terry Vanderman, Catalina Landivar, and Todd Kinskey.

Communications and Outreach

The Planning Partnership strives to keep its members and other interested parties informed of events, resources, and issues relevant to their communities. To that effect, the Planning Partnership publishes newsletters, reports, maintains a website (www.planningpartnership.org), and uses an electronic mail communication system to provide timely information to members of our community. The Partnership routinely conducts annual surveys, and relies on evaluations from participants to different events, programs, and services in an effort to stay connected with its customer base and instill a sense of continuous improvement in the organization.



Gene Krebs

Annual Meeting

The 2011 Planning Partnership Annual Meeting was held on March 25, 2011 with approximately 60 in attendance. During the meeting Tracy Winkler, representative of Green Township was elected Chair, Chris Bortz, representative of the City of Cincinnati was elected Chair-Elect, and Senator Richard Finan, representative of the City of Evendale was elected Vice-Chair.

Gene Krebs, from Greater Ohio in Columbus, was the keynote speaker. His talk focused on funding issues facing our local jurisdictions. He outlined many of the state funding sources proposed to be cut as part of the biennial budget currently under consideration. He presented data on the number of taxing districts per county and how Ohio has a proliferation of governments making these difficult economic times even more challenging. He gave specific suggestions as to how communities can work together to address financial issues and encouraged collaboration wherever possible.



Frank F. Ferris II Planning Award

The Frank F. Ferris II Planning Award was created by the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission in 1995 to recognize and honor the lifelong dedication of Mr. Frank F. Ferris II to municipal, county, and regional planning activities. It is awarded annually to a local planning commission or planning committee whose efforts have contributed to the elevation of planning principles, greater awareness of the value of planning, and improved quality of life.

The 2011 recipient of the Frank F. Ferris II Planning Award was the Village of Greenhills for its Comprehensive Plan Process and Citizen Participation.

Greenhills is one of three historic Greenbelt Communities in the nation. The Comprehensive Plan was the first prepared for Greenhills since the original planning and design of the community was completed by renowned experts in the 1930s.

2011 Initiatives and Accomplishments

The process developed for the creation of the Greenhills Comprehensive Plan and the extreme efforts initiated to engage citizens in the planning process was a monumental success and exemplified excellence in community planning. This effort brought together the entire community in a collaborative endeavor that will assist in sustaining the Village of Greenhills well into the future.



**Village of Greenhills
Mayor, Fred Murrell,
Councilmember Glenn
Drees, and Planning
Commission Chair Hal
Franke**

2012 Outlook

2012 Outlook

Following is a list of projects and initiatives that the Regional Planning Commission and Planning Partnership is currently engaged in or will pursue in 2012.

- Planning Partnership Annual Meeting
- Community Planning Forum
- Certified Planning Commissioners' Training Program
- Housing Plan – City of North College Hill
- Communities of the Future/Project Groundwork Planning Support
- Energy Performance Contract Implementation
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update
- 2012 Sustainable Hamilton County – Reinventing Our Communities Workshop Series
- Board of Zoning Appeals Training Project
- Community COMPASS Update - project design and research
- Development Website Project
- Amberley Village Special Zoning District Project
- Hamilton County Zoning Resolution Text Amendments
- Implementation of Development Regulations Analysis for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability Priority Recommendations
- Green Township Five Points Land Use & Zoning Analysis
- Village of Lincoln Heights Plans Assessment and Planning Committee Training
- Project Groundwork (Lower Mill Creek Watershed Action Plan, Lick Run Watershed Master Plan, Hamilton County Storm Water District/MSD/SMU – Regional Storm Water Design Manual)
- Connecting Active Communities Coalition

2011 Boards and Committees

- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
- American Planning Association (APA)
- Anderson Township Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee
- CAGIS (Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System) Policy Board
- Cincinnati Section APA-Ohio, Director
- Communities of the Future Advisory Committee (CFAC), Inform & Influence Sub-Committee, Policy Sub-Committee
- Community Development Advisory Committee
- County Planning Directors Association of Ohio (CPDAO)
- First Suburbs Consortium of Southwestern Ohio
- Greater Cincinnati Commitment Alliance
- Green Partnership for Greater Cincinnati –Steering Committee
- Green Umbrella Energy Conservation Team & Water Action Team
- Hamilton County Environmental Action Committee
- Hamilton County Housing Advisory Board
- Hamilton County Landbank Workgroup
- Hamilton County Urban Land Assembly Program / Brownfields Redevelopment Board
- Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities - Board of Directors
- Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA)
- APA-Ohio, Executive Committee - Secretary
- APA-Ohio, Legislative Chair
- Intermodal Coordinating Committee (ICC) at Ohio – Kentucky – Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments
- Plan Cincinnati Steering Committee, Plan Cincinnati Workgroups – Intergovernmental Cooperation, Housing, Transportation and Transit, Health, Environment and Open Space
- Planning Partnership Committees: Executive, Program, Planning Commissioners' Forum, Training for Planning and Zoning Commissioners, Annual Meeting, Nominating Committee
- Queen City Bike
- Sustainable Communities Federal Grant preparation committee
- Sustainable Hamilton County Planning Committee, Housing Group
- Cincinnati Form Based Code Initiative
- University of Cincinnati, College of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning (DAAP) Alumni Governing Board
- Cincinnati Area Professionals Green Infrastructure Network (CAPGIN)
- ALI Eco-Mentoring Program (Dater Montessori)

In addition to the daily work functions performed by staff of the Regional Planning Commission, the organization was also actively involved with initiatives in numerous organizations.

Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission
Planning Partnership

138 E. Court Street, Rm 801
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 946-4550

www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/planning.asp
www.planningpartnership.org